

Honorable Michael F. Urbanski

RECEIVED Jan 13, 1998

My name is Obayda Abed, I am writing in reference to my older brother Amar Abed, who will appear before you for resentencing in the coming days. I informed Mrs. Lee that I would like to testify on my brother's behalf about that stupid night in January of 95. I informed Mrs. Lee that my brother was not there, that he was on the couch sleep, she in return informed me that my cousin and co-defendant had already testified to that fact.

I would still like to take the time to please tell you a little about my brother, he blames himself for the situation that I am in, he feels that he influenced me, that's not so very true, in the end, and I know now, that it was my decision my actions my choices, decisions I made in those horrible years of my life that have hurt me and caused me to miss out on so much of what life has to offer, and hurt those that not only cared about, but also those who were the victims of our crimes, there are no victimless crimes, we never stop to think about the people we hurt when we were doing the stupid things that we do.

Your Honor Amar Abed is a good man a good person, he made mistakes and he recognizes that, we all do, he is my older brother and I love him and respect him, he is a Marine, a decorated Marine, a veteran of the Gulf war with an honorable discharge. During our time of incarceration we were blessed to be housed together



for about eight years, same cell, so we got to talk a lot and pray a lot our knees actually have caluses on them, we talked about a lot of thing, espically about life in general, all that we had thrown away, I would run out of paper listing the things, but they were all positive about our future and all the things that we would have to do to make right some of the wrongs we done, we always knew God would give us another chance, "he says if you look to me, I will come to you, come an inch, I will come a yard, come walking to me, I'll coming running to you!" Strong words with strong meaning your Honor.

Amar is remorseful we all our, we our not monster's, he's not a monster, we know what we did, what our actions caused and it was wrong, wrong to the highest degree, and I assure you we prayed evernite and begged God to forgive us, yes your Honor God is ever present in our lifes, had we listened to our mom and followed her way we might not be in the situation that we are today, they say our elder's are always right, and was she, right, about God and faith, whats the old saying, "Only if we knew then, what we know now." God would of kept us out of this trouble.

He has spent or shall I say we have spent some of the most important years of our lifes in prison, 23 years, the years where one sets his life goals and dreams and shoots for them, memories with loved ones, good and bad, gone, all those firsts, by noone's hands but our own, we know that



and blame noone but ourselves.

My big brother will be 48 when he appears in front of you, one of his dreams is to have a family and kids, wants to raise kids, threw me for a loop when he said it, but I can see it, he's a better person today then he was then, he'd make a great father. Good memories with our father are not many, so he we want to build more of those, atleast while we can. We didn't have the conception of life, God does things for reasons your Honor, like Amar told me, we needed this, I thought he was crazy, Prison! That's when he explained to me that we had missed the many signs that God had placed for us in the road of life, we never stopped to read the signs he said, so we ran off the ledge, but reading and studying God's books we were assured that we would get another chance, our prayers would be answered. God is the most merciful, forgiven, and compassionate, and when one truly and sincerely repents, he will answer our prayers. Chaplain Bland said it best, "God's books are a road map to life, if you follow them, read them right, you can never go wrong!"

Your Honor Amar is no longer, we are no longer those young, stupid immature beings, Amar is no longer that stupid misguided over medicated marine who was never deactivated mentally when he came back from war, some of the things he seen and done, Wow! Not an excuse, but something that should not be over looked. We know where we went wrong, what we did was wrong, believe me we hate ourselves



for some of the things we've done, not proud moments in our lives, there was no excuse though. But we have also paid dearly, not only 23 years of our lives. Ten years ago, me and Amar were the head cooks in the kitchen at Lewisburg Federal Prison, I was doing as I did everyday, calling to check in with Mom, when my brother answered and I asked to speak to mom, he informed me that she wasn't feeling <sup>sowell</sup>, never stopped her before your Honor, I knew something was wrong, she always talked to me, if anything else, just to assure us she was okay and to keep our faith strong.

So when they called the move, I went to the kitchen where my brother was already at work, he seen it in my face that something was wrong, I explained to him that I had called and they had informed me that mom was sick, she didn't talk to you he asked me, no I replied, he left and rushed back to the Housing unit to call, he knew that wasn't like her.

When he returned, I knew it your Honor, I knew she was gone, he said let me talk to you and I followed him to the rear dock, that's when my fears came to reality. I just thank God we were together when we got that news, I believe he intended it that way, we cried like baby's.

So I say all this to say, there is no worse punishment then for a man, one who has a heart and conscious to not be there for their mother, to be at her bed side, hold her hands in her last moments, to tell



her you love her and that your sorry for the pain and disappointment, and honor her by carrying her casket to her final resting place, saying good bye! Now that is punishment, true punishment for any being, that will stick with you for the rest of one's life.

Amar is going to appear in front of you in the next couple of days, he is a good man, a matured, rehabilitated decent man, he deserves mercy, he deserves a chance an opportunity for a second chance at life, 23 years is a lot of time your Honor, people have done far worse and have recieved less, Please your Honor have mercy on him, don't let the canvas get too muddied up and lose cite of the real picture. Give him a chance your Honor, you can always send us back if we abuse the blessing, yea, and a dont deplete your mercy basket on him, please save a little for me if possible, as I will be appearing before you in the near future.

I know our faith is being tested, and I know when we appear our faith could be strengthened or weakened, but no matter the outcome, we know not to question God, for he has his reason's, but we also know he answer's prayer's, or we would have never have gotten the opportunity to appear.

Thank you truly and Sincerely!

God Bless you

Amyda H. Alceel

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